STATEMENT BY MARILYN BUCK

at her sentencing in the Resistance Conspiracy Case
November 16, 1990

I am a child of World War II. I grew up in a period when the struggle for human rights and self-determination matured and won some victories; where the Nurnberg Principles and the Geneva Accords were put forward; when Brown vs. the Board of Education opened wome doors. It was supposed to be a new era--of peace and prosperity.

But it was also this period when the U.S. went to war against the Korean people; and when Nixon's and McCarthy's witchhunt against the Left sent people to prison, and took their livelihoods from them; and Black people were still being lynched....

While I was not aware of all these events when they first happened, they have played important roles in the formation of my consciousness and my conscience.

My consciousness did not merely register that there were rights and wrongs, but also that a person has the responsibility to struggle for what is just and against what is unjust. I am not unique. Nor are any of the comrades who have been charged in this case. Tens of thousands of post-World War II children learned this lesson as we watched what was happening right here in the U.S.

--Against Black peoples' just demands for human and civil rights, dogs were unleashed, clubs were swung, and even children were murdered.

--Against the Vietnamese people's just demands for an end to U.S. domination, bombs were dropped, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were murdered.

I learned about crime and criminal acts--those of the U.S. government about whom I was taught to sing: "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty..."

The sweetness was stolen from other nations' livelihoods.

And I learned about conspiracies:

--to dispossess Native Americans from their lands--by genocide and war;

--to finance an empire by enslaving African peoples, robbing them of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness--in the words of the Declaration of Independence--(for whites only);

--and about conspiracies to spread the U.S. empire by invading and colonizing Puerto Rico and the Philippines...

Today these conspiracies or criminal enterprises are indictable as crimes against peace; as war crimes; and as crimes against humanity.

So are the more recent conspiracies of the U.S. government:

--the invasions of Grenada and Panama

--the criminal enterprise to overthrow the democratically-elected government of Nicaragua

--as well as the newest one brewing--to gain military, economic, and political control of the Middle East region by going to war against

Iraq, after supplying that country with arms.

If these criminal conspiracies of the U.S. government are indictable, then I, too, or anyone in this room, or in this whole country, is liable under international law. Because knowledge makes me part of the conspiracy.

Unless one exposes it, and takes affirmative measures to prevent the commission of the crimes.

However, when people take such measures, the U.S. charges conspiracy, conspiracy, criminal conspiracy. It tries to criminalize and de-legitimize political opposition so that it will not be forced to face its own criminal behavior and make serious changes.

Tens of thousands of people have engaged in conspiracies to resist U.S. war crimes and the white supremacist ruling class parody of democracy. These are honorable conspiracies--for justice and human rights--necessary conspiracies, if we of this nation are to live with other nations in equality and peace, and with ourselves.

We each have a choice--to stand with the vast majority of peoples of the world who are struggling for self-determination and social justice or--
to stand on their backs.

I cannot betray the millions who struggle to be free and I cannot betray my conscience.

I have case my lot with oppressed nations. Because of this I am now imprisoned. I am a political prisoner, along with many other women and men from both the oppressed colonized nations who struggle for liberation, and from the white oppressor nation who refuse to accept the criminal genocidal policies of this government.

The wheels of the law roll over us, burying us in its dungeons, and its graves.
But the wheels of justice will come bringing freedom. They turn slowly because they are pushed forward inch by inch as women and men all over the world struggle to transform the dream of justice into the reality.

Your lives, my life, our lives have a significance that cannot be tarnished or twisted when we raise our voices to protest and to challenge and to resist injustice and stand with courage for liberation and the future.

And that is reason enough to raise our voices.

I will close with the words of Mario Benedetti:

WHY WE SING --- Mario Benedetti

If each hour brings its own death
if time is a den of thieves
and the winds are not favorable now
and life is nothing more than a moving target

You may ask why we sing.

if our heroes remain unsung
and our homeland kills us with its sadness
and the heart of humanity is broken into pieces
even before shame bursts it

you may ask why we sing.

if we are far away like a horizon
and if trees and sky stay there too
if each night is always some kind of absence
and each awakening a departure

you may ask why we sing.

we sing because the river sings
and when the river sings/ the river sings
we sing because cruelty has no name
and, on the other hand, its destiny does have one

we sing for the children and for all
and because of the future to come and because of the people
we sing because the survivors
and our dead want us to sing

we sing because to scream is not enough
nor is it enough to weep or raise hell
we sing because we believe in the people
and because we will defeat defeat

we sing because the sun recognizes us
and because the countryside smells like springtime
and because in this see in that fruit
each question has its answer

we sing because it rains in the trench
and we are militants of life
and because we can not and will not
let the song become ashes.

translated by marilyn buck